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THE MAN JESUS

BY MARY AUSTIN

CHAPTER VII

It seems that while they were in the way to Jerusalem, the reserve and caution which had characterized the movement of the Master for the past few months were suddenly laid aside. Jesus resumed the leadership, walked openly at the head of his disciples, filled with power. In answer to their fear and amazement he must have tried again to prepare them for what was to happen shortly at Jerusalem, and again the revelation was either too symbolic to be clear, or too clear to be believable. All that they seemed to gather from it was that the expected apocalypse was at hand; and, full of unshakable confidence in the result, James and John preferred their request. It was very simple: that they might sit the one on the right hand, the other on the left of him in glory.

Said the master, "Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?" They thought they could, knowing nothing of what the words signified, thinking of them, no doubt, as purely material, and that death and humiliation could in no wise be endured by one who healed lepers and raised the dying by the hand. But it was not their obtuseness which touched Jesus so nearly, nor the jealousy of the other ten at their asking, as the evidence of self-seeking the utter failure of his disciples to grasp the teaching which the last phases of his life were so completely to exemplify—the need and the power of service. "For whoso seeketh his life shall lose it and he that loseth shall find. . . . and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be the servant of all. . . . for the son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister."

Of the recorded part of this Perean pilgrimage there is very little more except what is common to all his ministry. Of healings there was but one, a blind man by the roadside as they came into Jericho; of parables the same sort, and perhaps the same that belonged to the preaching in Galilee. They were all of the kingdom and how it should be constituted and of the Fatherliness of God. The kingdom of heaven was a net which was let down into the sea, it was a field of sown wheat among which the enemy scattered tares, it was the leaven

hid in three measures of meal. It was anything that might imply separation of what is good from what is evil, the deliberate choice of the soul. The kingdom was something which, when you had found it, was worth all that you had to pay, into possession of which you might not enter without the full price. It was a little child whom he had set in their midst and said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." It was in being all that the child was,—trusting, doing no evil, thinking none, all-loving, glad. The kingdom of heaven proceeded from the heart outward, and was not affected by material observances. It was the faith of the mustard seed which, by merely accepting the condition of being a seed and growing, became as a tree in the branches of which lodged the birds of the air. "And behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

Of God there was less to say because simpler. He was a father pitying his children, rejoicing more over one sinner which repented than over ninety and nine which went not astray. He was the just judge and the wise master; the friend of the soul of man. He heard prayer and answered it, and men ought always to pray and faint not.

As to what Jesus said of himself there is less than this generation realizes. Nursed in an interpretation of Christianity which made Jesus the chief part of his own teaching, we have much to forget before we can see how apart he held himself from his doctrine. That day in Nazareth, when among his own kin he stood up in the synagogue and read from the book of Isaiah, was his first and only public attempt to represent himself as the fulfillment of prophecy. He read:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. . . . to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. But there is no evidence that when he began to say, "This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears," he thought of himself as anything more than the scripture described,—an appointed preacher, another voice in the wilderness. To John who sent asking, he offered not himself but his works. Once in the press at Capernaum a woman cried out, "Blessed be the woman that bore thee and the breasts that gave thee suck." And he answered her rebukingly, "Rather blessed be they that hear the word of God and keep it," and on the mountain, impatiently, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?"

Though he came finally to accept himself as the fulfillment of prophecy, it must never be forgotten that the Messiah of expectation was not thought of as a man of divine nature, but as divinely appointed. The claims which Jesus made to divinity were not different in kind from those he set up on behalf of every man, through a knowledge of sonship with the Father, through the personal revelation. Strive therefore. . . . "to know yourselves, and ye shall be aware that ye are the sons of the Father." Sayings such as these leave us in no doubt that Jesus meant to teach the kinship of God and man as a reality, the objective of the soul's immemorial quest.

Prophets had glimpsed it; the East had made the certainty its own, but with the difference which marks out the man of Nazareth for us as the foremost of Occidentals. The Orient had accepted its recognition of the deific principle in man as an invitation to Nirvana, the final reabsorption of selfhood in Godhead. And at the point where the East found itself, it turned its back on humanity. To Jesus it came as the call of the open road; the threshold of infinite possibility—"be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." The more he knew himself the son of God the more of a personality he became, the more social and livable his teaching.

That he did, by conscious realization of the divine principle in himself, arrive at a dignity and scope of character which, as we contemplate it, strikes a tremor out of us still at this distance, there can be no reasonable doubt; but equally no doubt that he thought of himself as distinct and apart from Godhead. "Why callest thou me good?" he protested, "there is none good but one, that is God."

That he was not wholly understood in this, even by those nearest to him, is evident from the way they phrased it.... "to as many as believed on him gave he power to become the sons of God...." So they thought of it as something bestowed rather than revealed; and of his offer of himself and his experiences as a demonstration of his claim to sonship, his enemies made a blasphemy. "He maketh himself equal to God"—though there must have been even less of this in his spoken word than we find in the gospels, colored as they were by what came to be thought of him afterward.

A prolific source of confusion as to what Jesus really claimed for himself, is a class of sayings which find a counterpart in the oracles of Greece and Rome, in which the speaker takes on the character of the god without assuming godhead on his own account. Among these are the sayings so freely attributed to him by the apostles.... "Come unto me, all ye that labor" and again, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in" where he left off his own character to speak with the voice of the Spirit.

Once to every man, when he loves greatly, when he finishes a great work, or when a son is born, comes the moment when he feels himself the center of incalculable harmonies, moving with the Tide of Things, entitled to speak with authority. This is that state called mystical to which men like Jesus are natural inheritors, needing no adventitious human experience to keep them at its most fructifying levels. It is the state of active communion with God which may be attained by self abnegations, which it is the object of religious fasting to capture and hold,—that electrical indwelling, impossible to define but needing only to be recalled to those who have experienced it. This was that bridegroom referred to by Jesus in answer to the Pharisees: "Can the children of the bridechamber fast while the bridegroom is with them?"—the spirit of true enlightenment. In the village

prayer meeting you will hear it referred to as "the joy of the Lord," but the great Christian mystics like Saint Theresa and Saint John of the Cross have used always to speak of it as Jesus often did, in terms of espousal.

To one who understands these things it is perfectly intelligible that Jesus would deny the need of fasting to those of his disciples who already had "the bridegroom with them," without making any claim to personal preciousness.

To the fact that the immediate followers of Jesus were simple folk, close to the earth, and so understanding his speeches when they were uttered, we may attribute the circumstance that no such claim was set up for him while he lived. For this also is a folk-way, to dramatize the soul's intimate experience.

Perhaps the most striking of those utterances in which the personality of the speaker was lost in the character, without assuming the attributes, of God is the apostrophe to Jerusalem:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together. . . and ye would not!" The passage lacks the "Thus saith the Lord," of the earlier prophets, but it has all their high impassioned quality.

It was not until years after his death, separated from the circumstance and the man's vivifying personality, that these sayings began to take on the character of announcements of divine identity. There is no evidence that Jesus thought at all of his own nature and attributes, of why he was chosen nor how, to be the bearer of the Word. He was concerned not at all about himself, but greatly for the will of God. If there was assumption of any kind on his part, at the most it was the unclouded conviction that he knew God as no one had yet known Him, and that he was called to impart that knowledge to others.

It was in some such frame as this that he passed through Perea for the last time and came again to the borders of Judea.

Of the unwritten part of this journey it is possible to think that there is much to be traced in the life of the Christian community during the next half score of years. How many were with him on the whole journey and how many joined him in the Rift of Jordan, can only be conjectured, but he arrived in Jerusalem with a sufficient company of his Galilean friends to give to their intercourse a certain definite stamp. Here was the beginning of that strong sense of community interest, the shared bread, the daily worship, grace before meat,—habits of living which characterized the first proselyting period of the new faith; the public testimony, the benediction, the hymn singing. Above all the gracious kindness, the cheer, the contained and quiet joy which was shed as a savor from early Christian behavior. Such as they were he must have been,—little vessels

all of them overfilled at his fountain. (*By the water courses of Reuben, great were the resolves of heart!*)

Here too must have been established that acceptance of all women in the Father, so unequivocal that all Paul's prejudice could not afterward controvert it; he admitted them to argument, he permitted them to sit in privileged places. It does not appear that he anywhere expressed himself as opposed to any of the current notions of sex inferiority; rather he conducted himself as if he had not known such distinctions to be in use. He had not one manner for the virtuous housewife and another for the woman of the town. He yielded to the argument of the Syrophenician woman, and in a story told by John, which seems to be compounded of a half remembered parable and some items of actual incident, he is shown as revealing himself quite simply to a woman at a wayside well,—a woman of the despised Samaritan sect, thought to be so far outside the grace of God as to be disbarred from the temple, but not beyond the reach of his gospel.

Not wholly authenticated, but true enough to the situation to have been true in fact, is an incident related in the book of Apostolic Ordinances. There had arisen, it appears, in the primitive church, the question of a separate ministry for women, for among the Jews women had never been admitted to the highest intimacies of religion. John was strongly in favor of it, urging that there had been no women present at the last supper, whereat Mary was seen to smile. But when Martha called their attention to it she denied that she had laughed, "For," said she, "he told us beforehand when he taught, that the weak should be saved through the strong." Whether or not the incident occurred as related, the freedom of Jesus from every form of social prejudice was evident enough to pull the early church about from its Oriental bias toward the subjugation of women, and face it definitely toward the larger liberty of the west. Themselves in bondage to the habit of their upbringing, the women of his following probably took less than he would have allowed them; it is not recorded that he ever refused any one of them what she asked. He included women in that democracy of the spirit which established a minimum value for every soul of both sexes and all classes.

At the time the little company came down out of the high veiled land of Moab, all Jewry was afoot and astir in this business of the Passover. In the month Adar the temple tax was collected, roads were mended, sepulchers whitened lest any pilgrim suffer defilement. From every village a devoted band set forth; the poor on their own feet, the rich in litters; Jews of the dispersion, Alexandrine bankers riding on camels. All the stony lanes were choked with bleating lambs for the Paschal rite, heifers for sacrifice; vendors of doves moving under great pyramids of cages. Caravans went up, goods of Damascus, Egyptian dates, silks of Arabia. Every morning found hordes of market gardeners with their donkeys waiting for the

opening of the gates. Great loads of palm branches, of green boughs cut from the jungle along Jordan went in for the building of booths. In their gardens outside the city the rich set up pavilions—for there were no gardens within the holy city lest the blown dust of manure defile the temple—and re-lived from Sabbath to Sabbath the years their fathers spent in the Wilderness.

Herod went up, needing greatly the public consent to his war with Aretas and the countenance of the Roman authorities; Pontius Pilate, from his official seat at Cesarea-by-the-sea; new Roman officials keen for this strange new festival; legionaries for the policing of the city. A million—in favored years two million—pilgrims gathered in Jerusalem. It was the time of the year's resurrection: the orchards budded, the tufted grass was greening, cyclamen came up in the clefts of the rock with round, shining leaves like shields of silver. Along the hard white ways between the cactus hedges there was sound of Psalm singing.

Into all this pageantry of historical and religious observance Jesus came with his company, knowing the way he was to walk and able to walk in it. At the ford of Jordan, probably the same at which he was baptized, he was met by warning advisers. "Depart hence: for Herod will kill thee." To which he made answer: "Go ye, and tell that fox. . . . I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." A cryptic saying to his disciples; but if we read "finished" for "perfected," it indicates clearly that he knew his work so near an end that it was immaterial what Herod should do to him. So with full courage he crossed over Jordan and stopped at Jericho, the fragrant. It sits in the midst of orchards close under the bluffs of Judea having the glittering surface of the Dead Sea always on the south and the brown river flowing past. When the wind is right, blown gusts of the temple music come faintly down from Jerusalem fifteen miles away. Here he spent the night and perhaps a Sabbath.

Two incidents, slight in themselves, illuminate the public mind. He was addressed by a blind man as Son of David, and Zacheus, the publican, climbed a tree that he might have a good look at the new prophet in the midst of the crowd that came out to meet him. For the movements of Jesus were noted, and to others than his immediate circle had spread the hope in him as the Messiah.

The road from Jericho to Jerusalem leads up a red gorge and its winding ridges, a hot, heavy way, blind, waterless. It figures chiefly as the scene of a parable which Jesus laid there, in which the falling among thieves was the likeliest and the rescue by the good Samaritan the loveliest that might have happened there. By this time there must have been a considerable company in the train of the man from Nazareth, traveling in a state of hardly suppressed excitement, for, says Luke, "they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear." They came singing as befitted pilgrims, a song

of going up, "songs of degrees," dating from the return from captivity.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
they sang, seeing the hill of Zion in the mind's eye long before they came in sight of it, and also:

*I was glad when they said unto me
Let us go into the house of the Lord!*

Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem!

for it was a great commemorative occasion, and there were many in that company who had not yet seen that sight most moving to any Jew, the holy city.

They would have been all the morning climbing up out of the sweltering Rift to the cool ridges. At Bethphage, where the road to Bethany turns off from the main highway, they took their mooning. Just around the shoulder of Olivet they would have had the first glimpse of Jerusalem. It burst upon them transfigured in the slant afternoon light, a city walled up to heaven from the gulfs of Hinnom and Kidron. First they saw the citadel, then the white towers of Atonia, the gilded temple roofs and the long arcade of Solomon's porch wreathed for the festival. . . . *whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. . . .* And looking on it, Jesus wept.

We can only conclude that what followed was born of the inspiration of the moment; it was part of that impassioned cry, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together!" which burst from him with all the warm and patriotic sentiment the sight of it stirred up, and with the knowledge deep in his own mind of what it was still to do to a prophet of Nazareth.

Perhaps the passage from Zechariah had just flashed upon his mind, *Thy king cometh unto thee. . . . lowly, and riding upon an ass* Jerusalem that dreamed of a Messiah sitting in the heavens, clothed in authority, Jerusalem that stoned the prophets, should have a parable in the true prophetic manner, after the fashion of Isaiah who walked three years barefoot without his upper garment, and of Zedekiah who bound horns upon his forehead with which to push against the Syrians. Sending back to the village which they had just passed to borrow an ass which he had seen tied there—for there were beasts everywhere to be hired for the sight-seeing—Jesus came riding on it into the chief city of the Jews, a man of the masses, travel stained, with long hair like a woman's.

So he fulfilled, for those who strained after these things, the strained letter of the prophecy. Viewed in any other light than that of the subtle spiritual irony of which he was master, the incident takes on a poor touch of human futility, and neither vanity nor futility had any place in him. To the simple Galileans, his followers, it appealed as an assumption of new dignities. They spread their garments before him, raising a loud Hosanna. From the temple

porch across Kedron came an answering shout. It was caught up by the crowd in the street, and many curious and devout who had listened to him in Galilee and Perea came pouring out of the Eastern Gate, waving palms and welcoming: *Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good!* chanted the pilgrim band, and from the crowd streaming from the city gates came the antiphonal response,

For his mercy endureth forever!

for so it was customary to receive pilgrims at the feast of the Pass-over. Throughout the capital it became known that the new prophet from Nazareth had arrived with his following.

Popular excitement must have died down very soon after the procession entered by the Eastern Gate. It tailed out in the narrow streets and lost itself in the vast throngs of the indifferent and the merely curious. Nothing whatever happened. The diminishing band of enthusiasts made their way toward the temple packed with the Jews of all nations. It would have been about the hour of the evening sacrifice, the money changers would have folded their tables, the vendors of doves had left for the day, the crowd was hushed and worshipful. Jesus and his handful of Galileans looked about on all the solemn wonders, and at evening retired to the Village of Bethany.

CHAPTER VIII

Consider the lair of the lion of Judah, how it is established on the prongs of the great central plateau, walled up to heaven. On Zion is the citadel; Moriah is pieced out by solid piers of masonry to make room for the temple. Between them the Tyropœon, the place of the merchants, leads down to Hinnom; round the eastern base sweeps the valley of Jehoshaphat, through which flows Kidron. Gardens lie thick in the trough of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom, but the ravine at the back of the city is called Gehenna, for rubbish is thrown there and a fire forever consumes the city's slough and waste. Across Kidron rises the Mount of Olives, from which the land falls eastward, by terraces, to the valley of the shadow, which is Jordan. Always Jerusalem looks into the gulf, but never quite to the bottom of it, and east away the blue hills of Moab float upon the horizon and affect the imagination like the sea. Northward stretches the hill country of Judea, full of contour and color. Reasons like these, as much as history, have to do with the pride of Jerusalem and its fierce resentment of overlordship. Herod the Great, being in part a Jew, held it with a strong, cruel hand; Archelus could not hold it at all, and Pontius Pilate, at this time Procurator, lost it.

But before Rome took her, the worst had already happened to Jerusalem. She had fallen into the hands of the hierarchy. Political imposition is a yoke upon men's necks, but the rule of priests is a fetter to the understanding. When Pilate ordered the Roman stand-

ards into the city—standards bearing the image of the Emperor, and hence an abomination—the Sanhedrin opposed him, and won; when he set up votive shields in Herod's palace, the four sons of Herod headed the protest to Rome; when he spent the temple treasure on an aqueduct, he had the whole priestly party against him; but when a man came freely speaking his opinion of priests and the conduct of the temple, they made of the Procurator the instrument of his destruction. Whether they fought Pilate or used him, the mainspring of action was always the preservation of their levitical authority.

Probably they thought they were right—it is one of the prime necessities of men in large numbers that they should think so of themselves—but one thing they knew, and that was that it was profitable. Here we touch on one other factor of the Hebrew religion which determined the development of Christianity, as the soil on which it is reared determines the harvest. We have seen how Jesus rooted himself in the reality of moral principle; all that follows goes to show how the survival of his teaching was shaped by the profound Hebrew conviction of the efficacy of sacrifice. The pagan gave to his gods when there was need or when he felt happy; but Israel gave also because there was virtue in giving. He gave whether God saved or destroyed him; he gave more or less as God prospered him; the one essential was that he should keep on giving. Israel took up the principle of sacrifice, which is an indeterminate element of all religion, and made it over with the aid of the business instinct.

What had been revealed to him as the soul's supremest need had become a system. It was no longer sacrifice but tribute. Greek or Roman set up his gods where he happened to be, but the heart of Jewry beat always at Jerusalem; it was the one place where offering was acceptable to the Lord. Wherever a faithful Jew was found, from him to the temple trickled a thin stream of gold. It came from Rome and Egypt and Babylonia; it came even from a prophet in Galilee and his twelve disciples. That Jesus very clearly distinguished between tribute and sacrifice is evident from the comment credited to him on the payment of the temple tax. Tribute was a thing which might be exacted of strangers, but never of the Children; between them and the Father no such necessity existed. Nevertheless, he released one of his disciples to go a-fishing to raise the money, that no offense might be given. He conformed to the custom rather than delay a greater matter by raising an issue; but his attitude toward the abuses growing out of the system brooked no compromise.

The abuses were precisely those which a few centuries later sprang up among his name-people; for Israel had hit upon the one plan by which a hierarchy may be consistently maintained; and Christianity, blindly led by the blind, fell into the same ditch. Whether it is called tribute, or modernly disguised as "systematic giving," it is only where sacrifice ceases to be the soul's highest voluntary function and becomes a habit that the Priesthood attains to temporal power. The

constant flow of tribute into Jerusalem had begotten a ring of grafters as invincible and corrupt as ever controlled a modern municipality. There were officials for collecting tribute and for transmitting it; merchants of exchange, who sat in the temple porch to exchange coin of all countries for the temple half-shekel, paying heavily for the privilege. There were inspectors of beasts bought for sacrifice who had to be compounded, vendors of temple wares—incense, phylacteries, reliquaries; such things as are sold immemorably about temples. Altogether the temple “rake-off” amounted to about forty thousand dollars yearly. All this was organized and, in a measure, controlled by one Annas, ex-high-priest, with his five sons, priests all, and Caiphas, his son-in-law, high-priest for the current occasion.

How much of this was known to Jesus and his disciples in Galilee is a matter of conjecture. Between affairs at the capital and the mass of the people stood the sect of the Sadducees, adroit, worldly, deriving authority solely from the books of Moses, discrediting the prophets; they intrigued alike with Rome and the priesthood, feathering their own nests. Not unknown to Jesus, they drew less of his condemnation than the Pharisees by making fewer pretensions. It is probable, however, that the Galileans had heard a rumor of these things as villagers hear them—things which they felt themselves knowing to believe or virtuous in denying. That nothing was further from their thoughts on the second morning, when they walked in from Bethany, can be easily gathered from what followed.

Jesus had spent the night at the house around which lingers the tradition of Martha, careful about many things, and Mary, who chose the better part in choosing to hear of the Kingdom. Bethany lies on the Jordan side of Olivet, hid from the city; Bethphage is at the junction of the Bethany road with the great public highway; from here is one continuous suburb of hamlet and garden to the foot of the rock from which the city soars above the abyss. It is from this point that the temple first engaged the eye, shining with the morning. From pillared court within court it rose dazzling, roofed with gold. The smoke of the morning sacrifice went up; they heard the choir chanting. But within, beyond the Court of the Gentiles, within the Court of the Men of Israel, which rose tier by tier from the Court of the Women, beyond the holy place where stood the great altar, the Holy of Holies was empty.

This would have been Monday by the most reliable chronology. If they arrived at the temple in the hour after the morning sacrifice, before the sightseeing crowd had well gathered, they would have seen the temple traffic at its worst and most sacrilegious. In the Court of the Gentiles, a wide, tessellated space enclosed with a noble Corinthian colonnade, the noise of the rabble, the bleating of sheep brought for sacrifice, must have struck offensively across the solemn associations awakened in the mind of every devout Jew on first entering the sacred precinct. Across the open court rose the sanctuary from its terrace,

doors and lintels overlaid with gold and silver. By the Gate Beautiful they went up into the Court of the Women, a handsome colonnaded space into which fifteen thousand worshipers could be crowded. Here, between the columns, they found the tables of the moneychangers; little shops set up along the wall spaces. One can understand how they would have hung together, the Galileans in their brown and white burnouses, around the tall figure of their prophet, ignored by hurrying priests, elbowed by insolent temple attendants, while the sense of what they saw sank into them. From the language used by Jesus when at last he could no longer keep silent, it must have been some extortion; some provincial mulcted of his due exchange; some widow overcharged for a pair of doves, that fanned his wrath into action.

The disturbance, whatever it was, could hardly have extended beyond the sanctuary—the money changers would not have risked a general riot. At the overturning of the first table they would have gathered up their monies, while the vendors of small wares fled, squealing. After all, the man might be a prophet, and the sympathy of the bystanders would certainly have been on his side.

It is reported that Jesus drove out the money changers with a whip, and from that time would permit none of his following to carry through the temple the implement and sign of his trade, as was the common practice, upon his person.

There is a ribald song still extant about the sons of Annas, who had a bazaar within the sanctuary, which shows how Jerusalem went with its tongue in its cheek in respect to the temple management. A more interesting commentary is the fact that not a word of all this leaked through to the Roman authorities. Here was the most influential group of Jerusalemites man-handled and affronted in their own temple, and nothing whatever is heard of the police, no complaint for assault is lodged. It is a commentary on the utter indefensibility of the temple traffic, and the only tribute paid by organized Jewry to the prophetic character of Jesus. In that brief period of hesitation was let slip the occasion to deal with him as an ordinary disturber of public worship. In spite of themselves they were forced to deal with him as a public character.

Deal with him they must, and that speedily. For not only had he driven out the traffic, but he continued to hang about the temple, both that day and the next, supported by his twelve stalwart Galileans, preaching to the people and enforcing, by the moral right of his presence, the embargo on everything not consistent with the traditions of the Sanctuary. And this while there were, perhaps, a million or two pilgrims in the city waiting to be fleeced. Plainly, the man was a nuisance and must be disposed of. They went about it in a manner truly Hebraic.

The first movement was to send a delegation to inquire by what authority he did these things, knowing that he had no Rabbinical

certificates, and thinking to discredit him with the public, for Hebraism is before all else a religion of authority. Jesus countered with another question.

“ The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men ? ”

He had them there ; for if they answered, “ From heaven,” why, then, had they not believed it ? And they dared not say “ of men,” lest the multitude, who counted John a prophet, be moved against them. So, neatly caught between the clefts of their own question, they withdrew from the first encounter, and, in the meantime, Jesus had the ear of the people. He preached there in the temple so full of his message that he snatched it from the very stones which, in wonder, they showed him—for the temple had been forty years in building, and was judged one of the wonders of the world. He drew from the widow, casting her mite into the box of the treasury ; he lifted up his eyes from Solomon’s porch, and saw the tombs of the prophets whitened newly for the season of the pilgrimage, and found in them the figure of hypocrisy, going smug without and inwardly full of corruption and dead men’s bones.

On the very day of the cleaning of the temple, while the rumor of it still ran about the pillars of Solomon’s porch, he spoke a parable, in which he quite explicitly stated that publicans and harlots should go into the Kingdom before the chief priests and their following. He scored the Pharisees afresh, devourers of widows’ houses, making long prayers for a pretense, seeing in their pious humbug the greatest menace to his teaching. Moving in imminent peril of his life, he moved as freely as among his Galilean hills, preaching in the temple daily and on the Mount of Olives, walking between the orchards, discoursing of the Kingdom. It was as if he understood that he was now at the end of his ministry, and was concerned merely to draw out and define again its salient teaching. In and out of a dozen brilliant parables flashed the doctrine of the Kingdom as a thing to be done, a task set and achieved, a charge to keep. Men believed, and, believing, acted, and in doing were saved . . . for “ inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these . . . ye have done it unto me.”

That he missed no point of the situation is evident from his appeal to the preaching of John, knowing the Baptist to have had a firmer hold than himself on the popular imagination, and also from the spirit with which he evaded the next trap which they set for him.

Unable, on the one hand, to discredit him with the populace, they sought, on the other, to set him at odds with Pilate. The approach was well calculated on the basis of his being a Galilean, one of that tribe among whom had developed the most invincible opposition to the Roman authority. Now, as one regarding not the person of man, would he or would he not advise them to give tribute to Caesar ? But the answer, “ Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s,” left them exactly where they were

before—if, in fact, it did not leave them a trifle more discomfited, for he had glanced here at the custom of paying divine honors to emperors, to which they had been a shade too complacent. Then came the Sadducees mocking, with a question trumped up about a resurrection from the dead—a possibility in which they did not in the least believe—and were answered out of their own Pentateuch in the words of their only prophet, Moses. In this fashion Jesus fenced for time, that he might drive home his message.

But the Pharisees, when they heard how he had reduced the Sadducees to silence, plumed themselves and came asking, “which is the great commandment?” None but they themselves knew what advantage they hoped for in the answer to such a question; what came, neither they nor the world has ever been able wholly to handle. Said Jesus:

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and . . . thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Then, suddenly wearied of questioning which had no honest query of the heart behind it, he turned on them with an exegetical problem so exactly in their own manner and so impossible to answer that it put an end once for all to that form of inquisition. Balked in wit, the priestly party turned to the one instrument which they understood perfectly, money. With money they might find somewhere in his defenses a weakness; seeking for it by means not unpracticed, they found Judas, the only one of the disciples not a Galilean.

The compounding of Judas with the agents of Caiphas is connected by tradition with an incident that occurred on Wednesday evening at the house of one Simon at Bethany, where the Master was being entertained at supper. No doubt Judas felt gulled and disappointed. Perhaps he had friends in the city to wag a sly finger at him. Here they were at Jerusalem, and no Kingdom: here, after nearly a year of following, still unaccepted, dependant on the chance hospitality of villagers, they who should have feasted in kings' houses! Thirty pieces of silver, about four months' wages, was not much to one who had expected to sit on one of the twelve thrones of Israel; but all that they wanted of him was that he should guide the temple police to his Master when few or none were by. He could have had no idea what was really to be done to Jesus, for the Sanhedrin itself had no notion, and was hard put to it, once they had taken the prophet, to find an accusation against him which would be acceptable to the Roman authorities. And surely, if the man was the Messiah, when the police laid hands on him, he would have to declare himself. So Judas must have mused inwardly while the supper went forward, and the uninvited, in the friendly Eastern fashion, edged up to catch some crumbs of wisdom as they fell from the prophet.

And, as he mused, came a woman having an alabaster box of oint-

ment, very costly, which she poured upon the head of Jesus. Thus it was done by the rich to guests of great distinction, but the thrifty folk of Bethany were shocked at it as an extravagance. How much more virtuous to have sold the ointment and given the money to the poor! This is what is called an eminently practical suggestion; but the practicality of Prophets is in another sort. "Let her alone," said Jesus; "ye have the poor always with you . . ." subject to our poor mechanical pieties. Once for all, he ranged himself on the side of the generous risks of the faith which, having risked, finds itself set aside for distinguished service.

"Lord"—all they who sat with him might have afterward said—"had we known thou wert to die, we, too, would have anointed thee;" but it is of those who, knowing no more than the rest, act freely on the impulse of the spirit, of whom these things are told in memorial. Judas, who is imagined as protesting most—Judas, who carried the bag for the twelve, and was no doubt elected to that office because of his eminent practicality—found in the incident the touch of futility which inclined him in the high priest's favor. He may even have thought, as is the way with the practical, that Jesus was prone to be feasted and fussed over, and that he would spur him on to his obvious mission, which was to take possession of Jerusalem and declare the Kingdom.

The next day was spent by the little company in retirement among the budding orchards of Olivet, either as a preparation for the Passover, or because they understood that the tide of popular interest, which had set in their favor for a day or two, had rolled back in its accustomed channel. They were swept under by it with scarcely a ripple on the surface of the city's festivity. From the walled hill-top came a murmur like a hive; the valleys were tremulous with the bleating of two hundred thousand lambs led up for the paschal rite. High over it rang the silver trumpets, the chanting choirs, the beat of mystic dances, all the mingled sound of Israel remembering his God magnificently. Processions choked the streets: pilgrim parties, Pilate going ceremoniously to call on visiting sovereignties, and these calling on the Governor again. In the Roman circus, under the wall, there were plays and spectacles.

The backward cast of history has warped out of all proportion the part that was played here by the Man of Nazareth and his twelve. They were, in fact, completely submerged in the great national commemoration. But history has not shown us a more appealing humanness than that of their leader, yearning in the midst of jeopardy for the hour of exalted communion with the race that rejected him, even though to make sure of passing it with his disciples he put forward the supreme observance by a day.

"With desire," he said, "I have desired to eat that Passover with you." To miss nothing of its full flavor, he ventured back within the sacred precinct, where the arm of his enemies reached with power, to

a room that had been reserved for him—by tradition, in the house of Mark's father. Here, when the shadow of the temple reached to Olivet and the seven branched candlesticks were lit, he repaired with the twelve to an upper chamber to keep the immemorial festival of his people.

Of this, no single authentic detail is preserved to us except what is known of the paschal ritual. That the nearness of his death and the certainty of being betrayed to it by one of his disciples was foremost in his mind, we gather from what was recalled afterward, and also that it was not understood at the time by any of the disciples except, perhaps, Judas. The words reported are unequivocal; but, in the light of the subsequent behavior of the disciples, we conclude that none of the references to his death had yet the force of an announcement. Still less can we accept the personal turn which was read back into the occasion by Paul of Tarsus. All that is historically admissible is that at some point in the ritualistic meal, either when he lifted the broken bread (*this is the bread of misery which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt*), or when the Cup of Blessing was poured, he said: "As often as ye do this, do it in remembrance of me;" that is to say, as often as ye eat the Passover, remember me—a natural, human suggestion, for he knew that he should not drink of the fruit of the vine again in this fashion. This is as far as history dare go; but there is no reason why the believing heart may not go further and stoutly assert its right to the symbol of a communion of spirit of which Jesus himself felt the need.

Another incident of this last supper has come down to us only in that second century record to which reference has been made, but, like the story of the woman taken in adultery, making good its claim by its complete harmony with what we know of Jesus and his manner of teaching. Somewhere near the end of the ritual he took a towel and girt himself, and, pouring water in a basin, he washed the feet of his disciples. But, Peter protesting, he said: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." And the impulsive Peter, linking the act with the symbol of cleansing, offered himself—not his feet alone, but his head and his hands also. But the words that followed are explicit enough: "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." In such fashion the man of Nazareth completed the round of his teaching, to forgive, to love and to serve. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

It was late when the meal was over; Judas had already gone on an errand more than suspected. The others had sung the last of the *Hallel*, that solemn and suggestive song of Israel's triumph.

The hour was upon them.

(To be continued.)